

Character	Appearance	Behaviour/personality	Function in text
Curley's Wife	'purty' 'face was heavily made up' Wears a lot of make-up and 'red dress'. Clothes unsuitable for ranch life. Perhaps they are a facade for her insecurity. Although she is married, still cares about her appearance. Bright colours she wears contrast the dullness/dark colours of workers' clothes.	Curley's wife is unhappy as no one seems to love her- esp Curley. She is well aware of the power she holds over men. In some ways she is overly confident as seen through her flirtatious behaviour ('she bridled a little') but in other ways, she's very fragile. She always seems to be 'looking' for someone but maybe she is just searching for attention and company, therefore demonstrating her loneliness. Desperate to confide in someone (her words tumbled out...before her listener was taken away') She enjoys her limited power over Crooks ('listen nigga..You know what I could do...') Her dream is to become a 'movie star' and this is perhaps reflected in the aspirational way she dresses.	Plot device: distracts Lennie and leads to his downfall. Creates a sense of foreboding by echoing the girl in Weed's 'red dress'.  Reflects position of women at this time in 1930s America- limited power e.g. she doesn't even have a name. She is just a possession of Curley. Women have lowest position with social hierarchy. Only other women are book mentioned are prostitutes.  It is also interesting to see how other characters react to her.
Slim	'A tall man' 'There was gravity in his manner' 'his hatchet face was ageless' 'he might have been 35 or 50' 'his hands were lean' 'delicate like a dancer' 'Jerkline skinner'; highest position on ranch. Wears a Stetson hat which is a typical symbol of power on the ranch. Gentle voice, friendly tone. His presence is powerful and almost god-like.	'Prince of the ranch'; respected by all. Often described in royal/ semi-religious tones 'Slim looked approvingly at George': non-judgemental/ approving which is a contrast to other characters Genuinely caring' offers to help Crooks and actually treats him with respect 'His tone was friendly. It invited confidence' : welcoming 'Slim looked through George and beyond him': insightful/powerful Described as having 'understanding beyond thought' He thinks more than other ranch workers Gives compliments (on Lennie 'he damn near killed his partner bucking barley;) Friendly towards George and Lennie: 'not many guys travel round together. I don't know why.' Takes control in problematic situations. Not passive though; will defend himself if necessary (e.g. against Curley's accusation) Slim's word is law; he has final say on Candy's dog ('if I was old I wish't somebody'd shoot me') Behaviour changes after Lennie is shot	To show that there may be exceptions within society. People need to get on with each other and stop hating one another. Accepts everyone without judgement. To set an example to readers on how to treat others- with dignity and respect.  Described as Steinbeck's mouthpiece; shows how Steinbeck thought people in society ought to behave.
Crooks	Black stable hand but crippled; he is victimised and both socially and physically inferior He is black; victim of racial prejudice Crooked back; reflects his name. He is known by his physical deformity (kicked and crippled by a horse)	Cynical- reflects extent of racial prejudice at time. Rejects friendship of Lennie and Candy initially, although is quick to confide in him and almost becomes involved in the dream. 'proud' 'aloof' Guards his limited rights fiercely. For example, keeps his room very tidy and has copy of Civil Rights act in his room. Fiercely protective Has least power; at bottom of hierarchy Enjoys his power over Lennie; makes him think George won't come back. Ridicule/ power shows how isolation can make you 'mean'. Physically isolated in from the bunkhouse. No family/friends. The only person who Curley's wife can exert any power over (threatens to have him lynched)	Reflects general loneliness and isolation of ranch workers at the time. Victim of racial prejudice/segregation Shows how loneliness can unite people (e.g. with Candy and Lennie) He is literate... perhaps Steinbeck is showing the power of education Emphasises the importance of individual rights Also represents the hopeless side of dreams.
Carlson	'A powerful, big stomached man' 'thick bodied'; physical presence is emphasised.	Intellect or emotions not evident; acts on instinct or goes with whoever has the most power. Lack of understanding/empathy e.g. cannot understand Candy's attachment to his job or George shooting Lennie ('what the hell you suppose is eating them two guys?') Kills Candy's dog; mean. Throughout the scene, remains focused on	Represents typical migrant worker in 1930s; unsympathetic, self-focused and lacking in understanding. Shows the brutality of this society; only the strongest survive.

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		<p>killing the dog ?('he stinks'/ 'he pointed with his toe')</p> <p>Lack of individuality; just attaches himself to most powerful in the group.</p> <p>Animalistic approach perhaps</p> <p>Does he feel loneliness? He seems unaware of how to act/behave around others. Contrast to Slim.</p>	
Candy	<p>'Tall, stoop shouldered' 'stick like wrist' 'bristly whiskers'; lack of care/attention</p> <p>Physically weak.</p> <p>Old man who lost his hand in a farming accident. Now has job as a 'swamper' ('I ain't much good with one hand')</p> <p>The word 'old' is repeated throughout</p> <p>Has lots in common with his dog- his only companion</p>	<p>Candy's relationship with his dog provides a parallel with George and Lennie; both rely on each other for survival; physically and emotionally ('I'm so used to 'im') George and Lennie are an elevated version of the dog/master relationship seen here. The dog's death reveals Candy's humanity/emotion creating sympathy for reader.</p> <p>Talkative; desperate for company&gt;</p> <p>Powerless. Fearful of losing his job.</p> <p>Feels he has found hope when he offers to put forward his stake for George and Lennie's farm. Almost makes the dream become a reality.</p> <p>Initially we see the gossip/ spiteful side of Candy when he tells about Curley's wife. However, his relationship with George gives him strength/dignity. Once Curley's Wife dies, he reverts to 'meanness', as he shouts at her dead body.</p> <p>Lost control of his life; subservient to others. There are only two occasions in which he stands up for himself; when he joins in on the attack on Curley ('glova full Vaseline) and when he tells Curley's Wife what he thinks of her. Each time, his defiance is short lived and it arguably only serves to make him seem more pathetic, in that we are able to see his lost potential and what he might have been.</p>	<p>Shows the reader what happens to an old, fragile man best by physical disability, loneliness and rejection</p> <p>Represents the hopelessness of dreams in this society. He has the money to make it happen but 'things often go wrong' and he does not have the strength to make it on his own.</p> <p>Represents the fate of the itinerant worker once they get older. Contrasts the American Dream; he has never achieved it even though he has money.</p>
Curley	<p>Small man who 'hates big guys'</p> <p>Wears a 'glove fulla vaseline'; trying to prove his sexual prowess</p> <p>Tries to imitate his father's clothes (e.g. wearing high heeled boots) Symbolises his insecurity</p> <p>Hands quick to curl into 'fists'; physically aggressive demeanour emphasised throughout</p>	<p>Violent and aggressive; used to be a professional boxer. Always looking for his wife, but shows no real affection for her. When she dies he is more concerned with catching Lennie.</p> <p>Threatened by Lennie; irony as the reader knows that Lennie can do no harm.</p> <p>Gives way to Slim demonstrating his tendency to pick on the weak. He is a bully.</p>	<p>Shows how 'mean' some people can become</p> <p>Perhaps is lonely/insecure because the society places so much value on physical strength/ economic power.</p> <p>Has no real dream; just follows his father. Although perhaps, his dream was to be a winning fighter. It is hard to have sympathy for him though.</p>
George	<p>'Small, strong hands, slender arms, a thin and bony nose'</p>	<p>Due to his mild mental disability, Lennie completely depends upon George, his friend and traveling companion, for guidance and protection. The two men share a vision of a farm that they will own together, a vision that Lennie believes in wholeheartedly. Gentle and kind, Lennie nevertheless does not understand his own strength. His love of petting soft things, such as small animals, dresses, and people's hair, leads to disaster.</p>	<p>They are the protagonists in the novel. Steinbeck uses them to explore not only their relationship but also the world they were trying to navigate through. George and Lennie are very much an anomaly in this world of itinerant ranch hands. On a superficial level, one is clever and smaller while the other is "dumb" and big. Dig a little and you find a friendship based on unconditional love and loyalty. We examine this against an aching loneliness that permeates ranch life. We really want them to have this dream but their understanding of each other does not extend to their ranch society. In the end George and Lennie are alone which makes the ending that much more tragic.</p>
Lennie	<p>'Huge man'</p> <p>'Shapeless of face with large, pale eyes with wide, sloping shoulders.'</p> <p>'walked heavily, dragging his feet...the way a bear drags his paws.'</p>	<p>A small, wiry, quick-witted man who travels with, and cares for, Lennie. Although he frequently speaks of how much better his life would be without his caretaking responsibilities, George is obviously devoted to Lennie. George's behaviour is motivated by the desire to protect Lennie and, eventually, deliver them both to the farm of their dreams. Though George is the source of the often-told story of life on their future farm, it is Lennie's childlike faith that enables George to actually believe his account of their future.</p>	<p>Same as above</p>